



"Unity in Diversity" Theme of Regional Convocation

A language that speaks of "Unity in Diversity" was the timely theme of all the presentations given at the Regional Convocation of Italian American Organizations held at Burlington County College on Saturday, March 10, organized by the NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission (NJIAHC), Burlington County College (BCC), and the Amici della lingua italiana. Dr. Robert Messina, President of BCC and Cav. N. Larry Paragano, Chairman of the NJIAHC both spoke of the importance of an ethnic community's sense of self-identity and history as the basis for unity among all ethnic groups.

Presentations by Sr. Carmela M. Cristiano, Trustee of the Amici della lingua italiana, Mr. Joe Paglione, founder of the Amici, and Vito Finizio, President of Amici, were all punctuated by the message of success through determination and dedication. Mr. Finizio announced the first generous \$5,000 scholarship by the family of Lina Aria, recently deceased member of the Amici organization, to be awarded in the near future to a student of Italian.

Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari, Honorary Vice Consul for Italy in Trenton and Chair of the

NJIAHC Curriculum Committee, introduced the history and the pedagogy behind the Italian Heritage Curriculum Project. Her colleague Dr. John Dougherty, NJ State Coordinator of Social Studies, emphasized that "diversity is our strength." The infusion model on which the curriculum is based allows teachers of all disciplines to introduce Italian culture in their classes through a relevant, multicultural, and inclusive approach that meets rigorous academic standards. The focus of this year's lesson plans will be "Italy and the Holocaust" and "Achievements of Italian and Italian American Women."

Dr. Paul Winkler, Executive Director of the NJ Holocaust Commission, indicated how groups are demonstrating their uniqueness while still becoming an integral part of United States society, noting that the NJIAHC, the Amistad Commission, and the Holocaust Commission,

by working in tandem, prove that "we are not divided, that people of good will can stand up against prejudice."

A video of a class on stereotyping conducted by Karen La Rosa and a live presentation on Leonardo Da Vinci by Elizabeth Adair demonstrated how user-friendly and effective the lesson plans are. Mr. Frank Gargione, Co-



Programs for the Convocation.



Enjoying coffee and conversation from l. to r.: Mary Rorro, Carl Carabelli, Comm. Maurice T. Perilli, John Scarpati, Cav. Richard Bilotti.



A few "Amici della lingua italiana": (From l. to r.) Gregorio Candelieri, Anna De Cristofaro, Frank Serafine, Linda Serafine, Carole Bertotti.

Chair of the Community Advisory Council, and the Honorable Stefano Mistretta, Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia, reminded the attendees that this excellent curriculum needs public support. The Consul Stefano Mistretta concluded the program by bestowing upon Dr. Robert Freda and Mr. Richard Bilotti the honor of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic in recognition of their tireless efforts to ensure that the voice of Italian Americans be heard in concert with those of all ethnic communities.

For more information about promoting the Italian heritage curriculum in your school district, contact Dr. Mary Ann Re, Executive Director of the NJIAHC, at 732-932-0670 or Info@iah.rutgers.edu. ■



Marisa Trubiano with David Iommarini (l.) and Mario Marano.



Sr. Carmela M. Cristiano with (l. to r.) Dr. Robert Messina, Cav. N. Larry Paragano, Frank Gargione, Cav. Richard Bilotti, Mario Marano.



Chairman's Message

As I prepare to step down from my position as Chairman of the Commission, it is with pride in the accomplishments of the past five and a half years as well as anticipation of the many goals yet to be realized. The establishment of the NJIAHC as the first state commission of its type in the country represents the fulfillment of the dreams of so many Italian Americans in New Jersey: an organization dedicated to raising public awareness of the rich and varied heritage, achievements, traditions and culture of Italians and Italian Americans.



Chairman

Cav. N. Larry Paragano

- Co-sponsorship of a conference at Seton Hall University titled, REAL STORIES: Discrimination and Defamation in the History of Italian Americans.
- A trade conference, "Italy: Capitalizing on Commercial Opportunity and a Rich Cultural Heritage."
- The AMICIZIA program, which facilitates the exchange of letters and emails between students in Italy and New Jersey.
- Support for many lectures, symposia, conferences, and lectures held at colleges and universities throughout the state.
- Grants and scholarships for language study both here and in Italy.

These and the other achievements of which I am proud could never have been accomplished without the support of my fellow commissioners, our dedicated staff and the many advisors who have contributed to the success of the Commission. Their encouragement, hard work, and expertise have produced stellar results.

At this time I am pleased to pass on the Chairmanship to Cav. Richard Bilotti, publisher of the Trenton Times. Richard will continue to build on the foundation we have laid and will reach out to our community for partnership. I look forward to working with him as we continue to achieve our common goals. ■

Among the many achievements of the Commission's first few years are:

- Creation and distribution of the curriculum project, "Universality of Italian Heritage," to the state's nearly 600 public school districts.
- A 30-minute film produced in conjunction with NJN, "Italians of New Jersey: A Legacy of Achievement."
- Establishment of an annual congress for members of Italian American organizations, politicians, dignitaries, teachers and students.

SAVE THE DATE

Monday, September 17, 2007

Teacher Training session on the Universality of Italian Heritage Curriculum at the Department of Education in Trenton.

Wednesday, September 19, 2007

NJIAHC meeting
State House in Trenton

Saturday, October 27, 2007

Congress for Italian American organizations entitled "NJ Italians in the Arts," at Scott Hall, Rutgers University, New Brunswick

Wednesday, November 28, 2007

NJIAHC meeting
State House in Trenton

The NJIAHC received mention in the

Italian book *I primi*

cinquant'anni del

"Galilei" di Canicatti

by Prof. Gaetano

Augello. Also cited was

Prof. Giovanni Tese,

the AMICIZIA program representative in Sicily, who coordinates the correspondence between NJ and Sicilian students.



News of Note



At a meeting in March between NJ's Governor and Italy's Consul General, cultural, political and economic ties between the two were renewed. From left to right: Paul DiGaetano, Aniello Musella, Alfio Russo, Consul General Antonio Bandini, Governor Jon Corzine, Vice Consul Paolo Toschi, Cav. N. Larry Paragano, Mary Ann Re.



Richard Bilotti (l.) with Metropolitan Opera tenor Ronald Naldi and his wife at the 45th Annual Winter Concert at Princeton University, a fundraiser for the Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra.



Mario and Maria Marano with famed Italian actress Gina Lollobrigida, who was honored recently by NIAF.



Commission Sponsors Rutgers Italian Hours Series

This spring's schedule of Rutgers Italian Hours events, all free and open to the general public, surveyed Italian nationalism, architecture and cinema in the era of World War II—but also showed why 17th century Emilia-Romagna should be considered the home of modern occupational safety.

In February Jennie Hirsh and Lidia Santarelli, both Fellows of the Italian Academy at Columbia University, presented a workshop on constructions of Italian Fascism in Greek spaces. The hero of the March "Italian Hours" was the amazing Bernadino Ramazzini (1633-1714), a physician from Carpi (near Modena) in Emilia-Romagna. The speaker was the next best thing to Ramazzini—Paul Lioy, a world-renowned professor of environmental and community medicine who holds appointments at both UMDNJ and Rutgers.

For April, "Italian Hours" went to the movies, specifically the cinema of immediate post-war Italy. Our host was Ruth Ben-Ghiat, chair of Italian Studies at New York University, and

author of the landmark 2001 book *Fascist Modernities: Italy 1922-1945*. Ben-Ghiat examined in fascinating detail how the nation's film industry of the years 1945-1947 handled the transition from a traumatic dictatorship.



At the February 2007 "Italian Hours", on Italian Fascism and Greece, left to right: Jennie Hirsh, HEC member Corey Brennan, Lidia Santarelli.

Looking ahead to the next academic year, "Italian Hours" is set to feature lectures on Italian women's writings in the Renaissance, and on contemporary Italy and the antiquities trade. Then there is a planned conference on translating Dante, and an evening with the makers of the PBS documentary

'Ubaldo', an amazing film on why the devout run with 600-pound saints' statues at festivals in Gubbio, Italy, and tiny Jessup, Pennsylvania. And Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr. of the US Supreme Court is a confirmed speaker for spring 2008.

To join the "Italian Hours" mailing list, email T. Corey Brennan at tcbr@rci.rutgers.edu or call him at 732.932.9493. T. Corey Brennan is associate professor and Chair in Classics at Rutgers, and director of the university's Italian Studies program. ■



In March Paul Lioy spoke on the legacy of occupational medicine visionary Bernadino Ramazzini. Grallator ("stilt walker", ca. 200 million years old) on the right.



Some of the students who turned out for NYU professor Ruth Ben-Ghiat's April "Italian Hours" lecture, "Italian film in the aftermath of war and dictatorship."

St. Joseph's Feast in Hawthorne

Among the large crowd that filled the San Giuseppe Santa Croce Camerina Society Hall on the night of St. Joseph's Feast, March 24, were Congressman Bill Pascrell, State Senator John Girgenti, former Mayor of Hawthorne Fred Criscitelli, and students from Hawthorne High School who attended along with their teacher, Mrs. Annette D'Amato. ■



San Giuseppe procession.



San Giuseppe Opening Night.



Showcase Symposium

On March 30, 2007, the Higher Education Committee of The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission presented "Showcase Italian: Pedagogical Approaches to Italian Language, Italian Studies, and Italian American Studies." The event was designed to provide innovative teaching techniques and practical tips on launching and enhancing programs in these areas. Hosted by Rutgers University, this exciting and unprecedented program brought together three disciplinary areas—Italian Studies, Italian American Studies, and Italian Language Studies—and broke down traditional barriers within education by bringing together faculty from community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities, along with high school teachers, to discuss the all-too-often

neglected subject: what and how do we teach?

The Symposium featured concurrent panels in the morning including a two part panel on "Teaching Italian Language and Culture;" another on different disciplinary approaches to Italian American Studies; and a session on Italian Studies entitled "What Should Italian Studies Do?" Among the institutions represented at the symposium were: The John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, SUNY/Stony Brook, CUNY/Brooklyn College, CUNY/Hunter College, Seton Hall University, Montclair State University, Hofstra University, SUNY/Purchase, University of Pennsylvania,



Higher Education Committee celebrates the success of the Symposium with Baci and prosecco.

County College of Morris, The College of New Jersey, New Jersey City University, Princeton University, Rutgers University, and New York University. The Vice Consul in Newark, Paolo Toschi, and the Director of Education for the NY Consular Office, Alfio Russo, offered greetings on behalf of the Italian government, and expressed their strong support for educational activities like the symposium. ■

"Cavaliere" Honor Bestowed

The decoration of Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella della Solidarietà Italiana was bestowed recently to three men of the NJIAHC: Chairman N. Larry Paragano, Vice Chairman Richard Bilotti, and former Executive Director Dr. Robert Freda. The Stella della Solidarietà Italiana was originally instituted in 1947 to recognize the achievements of those Italians and foreigners who had played a distinguished role in the reconstruction of Italy after World War II.



Cav. N. Larry Paragano.

Mr. Paragano was cited for his outstanding entrepreneurial success as well as his charitable and cultural contributions to Italian and US causes. Providing leadership in a number of organizations, he is chairman of the Paragano Family Foundation and serves as member of the board for Columbus Hospital Foundation, Shepherds of Youth and is the Chairman of Enterprise Bank. Mr. Paragano has received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, the Italian American National Hall

of Fame Award, Medal of Freedom Award from the State of Israel, and "Man of the Year" award from UNICO National as well as from the Center for Italian and Italian American Culture.

Mr. Bilotti is currently the Publisher of The Times in Trenton and serves in many organizations including Mercer County Chamber of Commerce, Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce, and the Hamilton Partnership. He is also President of the Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra and the Trenton Education Dance Institute. For more than five years, Mr. Bilotti has mentored Maestro Fernando Raucci, an Italian conductor from Isernia, along with whom he often brings musical events from the US to Italy and vice versa.

Dr. Freda, a retired educator with over forty-five years of experience in public service and non-profit organizations, was the first



Accepting their awards on March 10 from Consul General Stefano Mistretta (center) are Cav. Richard Bilotti (to his left) and Cav. Dr. Robert Freda (to his right). On hand are Comm. Maurice Perilli (far left) and Cav. Joseph Coccia (far right).

Executive Director of the NJIAHC. He was a charter member of the Executive Committee of the NJ Human Relations Committee and has served as Associate and Executive Director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, NJ Region. Dr. Freda has served as teacher, administrator, and Superintendent in NJ public schools, taught as co-adjunct Associate Professor at Rutgers Graduate School of Education, Kean University and Georgian Court College. ■



Teach the Teacher

On January 24, at the Department of Education in Trenton, the teachers became the students. This full-day training workshop demonstrated effective and innovative ways to incorporate the "Universality of Italian Heritage" curriculum into individual curricula. The curriculum contains consecutive lesson plans covering a diverse and inclusive range of topics applicable to all students. Carefully designed and thoroughly tested, the lesson plans are relevant to all students regardless of ethnic heritage or Italian language skills and interests.



From left: Dr. Paul Winkler, Mary Ann Re, Dr. John Dougherty, Hon. Stefano Mistretta, Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari.



Engaged students enjoying small group exercises.

Step Up and Be Counted

Calling All Italian and Italian-American Organizations

In the eight months I have had the pleasure—and honor—of serving as the Executive Director of the NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, I have had the opportunity to meet hundreds of volunteers from all walks of life throughout the state's Italian and Italian-American communities—students and teachers from elementary through graduate school, business professionals, Italian-born through fourth generation citizens, some with dual citizenship and others diligently striving to secure their Italian citizenship.

Of particular delight, however, has been my interaction with the Italian and Italian-American organizations across the state. I can attest that I have invariably been welcomed with open arms by ever-attentive groups, hailing from virtually every one of the 21 Regions of Italy—eager to share their personal experiences of growing up in culturally rich Italian and Italian-American households, and enthusiastically assuming the enjoyable task of sharing that experience with their children and grandchildren.

Well, we want to get to know even MORE of you! We want to hear what's on your mind and understand how the Commission

can serve you even more effectively.

Therefore, I would enthusiastically urge you to step up and be counted among the NJ Italian-American organizations our staff has on file. We believe we have services of value to share with you—and we know through personal experience that you have much to share with us as we develop academic and heritage-education programs for your use.

So, please: give us a call (732.932.0670); drop us an email (info@iahi.rutgers.edu); go to our website (www.njitalia.nj.gov). Given the natural evolution of organizations over time—some disband, others merge, leaders change, new groups form to meet new needs—we need your help as we strive to maintain and continuously update an inventory of the Italian and Italian-American associations across the 21 counties of our great state. Please, if you're out there and not on our mailing list, "We'd like to get to know you!"



M.A. Re
Exec. Dir. NJIAHC

Support Your Heritage!

The New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation works to promote a bias-free, positive image of Italian and Italian American people.

The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, which is supported by the Foundation, developed a curriculum that is currently available for schools throughout the state of New Jersey. Through education we promote activities and programs that build and strengthen the cultural identity of people of Italian descent. We rely on contributions from our Italian American friends to help us spread the word about our rich culture, heritage and language. Won't you join with us?

Your gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more will help us to provide programs and services necessary to accomplish our mission. Of course a gift of any amount is always appreciated.

To make a contribution, please complete the form and return it with your check to:
The New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation, 18 Bishop Place, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.
For further information please contact David Iommarini at 732-932-2131.

☐ Yes, I am proud of my heritage and wish to support it!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____



THE NEW JERSEY

ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



Focus on Sicily

This spring Caldwell College hosted a lecture series, Focus on Sicily, designed to further the understanding of the island's diverse and varied cultures. Co-sponsored by the Italian Vice Consul, the Center for Italian and Italian American Culture, NJIAHC, and ITANJ, the series' highlight was a presentation by Cav. Uff. Anita Garibaldi, great-granddaughter of Giuseppe Garibaldi. Her lecture, "Hero of Two Worlds," examined Garibaldi's life and his role in facilitating the unification of Italy.

The series also included lectures on The Geology and Early History of Sicily, by Gaetano Salemi, which focused on Sicily's location on the tectonic fault line between Europe and Africa, as well as Sicily and Italian Opera, by Dr. Sally Jo Weber, an examination of the Sicilian characters and historical episodes that became operas. ■



Vice Consul for Newark Paolo Toschi with Cav. Uff. Anita Garibaldi and Sister Patrice Werner, President of Caldwell College.



Italian Teachers of NJ gather with Cav. Uff. Anita Garibaldi.

The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey.

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